31 August 1999

Original: English

Committee on Conferences
Substantive session

Draft report

Addendum

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II. Control and limitation of documentation

A. Review of the late issuance of documentation

Introduction and overview

1. At its substantive session in 1998, the Committee on Conferences requested the Secretariat to submit to it, at its substantive session in 1999, a report containing data on the reasons for delays in the issuance of documentation and an analysis of the additional costs incurred by document-processing services and of other financial implications of the late submission and issuance of documentation. Subsequently, in paragraph 9 of resolution 53/208 B of 18 December 1998, the General Assembly endorsed this request. In paragraph 4 of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretariat to carry out a study on the possible relationship between the late issuance of documentation and the low utilization factor of conference services by some bodies.

2. At its 421st meeting, on 31 August 1999, the Committee considered a conference room paper on the matter (A/AC.172/1999/CRP.8).

Discussion

3. Concern was expressed over the late submission of documents and the non-compliance with the six-week rule, which, in many cases, was attributable to the author departments, and which consequently resulted in additional costs for general temporary assistance and/or overtime necessary to compress turnaround time.

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4. The view was expressed that the decision of the General Assembly in paragraph 8 of resolution 53/208 B be reiterated, since it had not been fully complied with.

5. The possibility of a further review and study of the problem of the late issuance of documentation and its relationship to the low utilization factor of certain United Nations organs was suggested.

Conclusions and recommendations

6. The Committee on Conferences took note of the report on the review of the late issuance of documentation (A/AC.172/1999/CRP.8).

7. The Committee suggested a further analysis of cases in which the limited availability of documentation coincided with a low utilization factor with a view to ascertaining whether a direct relationship existed.

8. The Committee looked forward to receiving updated information on the number and length of documents.

9. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it reaffirm that if a report is submitted late to conference services, the reasons for this should be included in a footnote to the document.